

office



Abstraction Through Chaos: Hunter Amos

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New York City's chaos serves as a distinct wellspring of creativity for Hunter Amos, the Australian-born painter. Amos now resides in Manhattan, where he skillfully blends his artistic craft and immerses himself completely, pouring his being into his work. By conceptualizing human bodies abstractly, Hunter leaves his audience interpreting the meaning and losing themselves in the process.

Having adapted from the laid-back lifestyle of Australia to the hustle of the city, Amos has been able to not only keep up but transcend, establishing himself as a painter whose legacy will endure. Over the past two years, he has carefully curated a collection in preparation for a solo exhibition set to kick off the new year.

Interview by Cassie Jekanoski
Photography Ritchie Jo Espenilla

The artist sat down with office to give us insight as to who he is and the work he makes.

How are you doing and where's your headspace at?

It's kind of chaotic. The city is always exhilarating and challenging. I'm busy trying to finish paintings this week.

ANNA ZORINA GALLERY

Where do you get find inspiration when it comes to your paintings?

At the moment it's a kind of dance with the paint itself. I'm allowing it to take me in a direction that challenges how intentional I should be with the composition. I'm trying to create a space where the planned and unplanned meet. In terms of subject, I'm focusing on how the figure can correlate with the kind of abstraction I'm working on. I'm seeing how much I can enhance a concept through how the body's composed, how the paint is applied, or how the canvas is shaped, or textured.

What's the process like from start to finish when creating a new piece?

To begin, there's only what excites me. Usually it's a fleeting moment that catches my attention. From there, I choose materials or some kind of figurative composition that resonates with that thought. Then, I might be able to bring something out of the ambiguity. Whether it's how a figure is posed or how it's abstracted, it's a stab in the dark. The way a figure might merge into abstraction usually then allows me to find new relatable forms to play off.

How did you get started and what is it that draws you to your medium?

My mum always influenced me. She was making work around me as I grew up. When I was 16 I was experimenting with sculpture and then I tried to find a more raw essence in my practice which led me to the simplest and most daunting medium of paint. Over time as I experimented, I became more captivated by the way new materials could compliment the kind of composition I've been working with. I'd mix these materials into the paint and juxtapose it with the figuration. This stage of my work is still an investigation into strengthening these methods to reach the kind of resonance I'm searching for.



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ANNA ZORINA GALLERY

Is there anything about Australia reminiscent in your work?

Some of the subject matter used to correlate to the Australian landscape but I don't see it as much anymore. Evolving my practice in New York, the foundational connection to the landscape around me remains constant.

Living in New York City, what is it about it draws you in?

Everything. As much as it can be difficult to function as an artist here today, it still inspires me a lot. There's an edge in its volatility. I feel as though everything could go to shit or all could be wonderful by tomorrow and that keeps me present here.

You're also about to have your own show, what's the process been like leading up to it?

Right now I'm showing at Anna Zorina Gallery in Los Angeles. For my New York solo, it's a body of work that I've been revisiting for the last two years. The experience of materializing it has been mostly rough and it's what I've depicted. The work represents this grappling with chaos. I knew these pieces had to be for a strong solo show and I'm grateful it's able to be presented in the right way. The show will be in Chelsea in January.

Are there other forms of expression you tap into other than painting?

Through painting is how I'm expressing myself for now but I revel in all art forms, always bringing me solace with the same appreciation of art as a whole.

Where would you like to see yourself and your work five years from now?

The freedom of having funding and access for future projects excites me. I'll find how things can be better materialized and also discover new more engaging subject matter. I also envision having more collaborative projects, bridging the gap between the work of a lot of great artists around me and diving into different kinds of pursuits myself. At the moment I'm ideating and sketching out future work, looking into manipulating organic material, new kinds of painting methods, and video performance works. It comes back to that influence of different artists around me and understanding this potential. I believe in this significant capability of many different kinds of work and I'm excited to have it all come into existence. For now it's just trying to serve my work in that same way.

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